

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, comprising:

a holding unit configured to hold corresponding information corresponding to first device identification information and second device identification information;

an obtaining unit configured to obtain accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device;

a determination ~~comparing~~ unit configured to compare a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with the corresponding information held by ~~[[the]]~~ said holding unit, and determine whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed;

a communication controlling unit configured to issue a notification to control ~~issuance of a notification to~~ an external apparatus ~~in accordance with~~ when said determination unit determines that one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed ~~a result of the comparison by the comparing unit~~ and not to issue a notification to the external apparatus when said determination unit determines that neither one of the first device identification information

and the second device identification information is being managed, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and

an updating unit configured to update the corresponding information held by [[the]] said holding unit in accordance with an update notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information, from the external apparatus,

wherein the notification issued by [[the]] said communication controlling unit includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and

wherein [[the]] said communication controlling unit restricts issuing the accounting information obtained from the predetermined device by [[the]] said obtaining unit to the external apparatus if ~~the comparing~~ said determination unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained by [[the]] said obtaining unit to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated by [[the]] said updating unit.

Claim 2. (Canceled)

Claim 3. (Previously Presented) An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a receiving unit configured to receive the corresponding information

from the external apparatus through the communications line.

Claim 4. (Canceled)

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising

an inputting unit configured to input an instruction for updating the first device identification information and/or the second device identification information,

wherein [[the]] said communication controlling unit issues a notification for update, based on the update instruction input by [[the]] said inputting unit, to the external apparatus.

Claims 6 - 8. (Canceled)

Claim 9. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first device identification information is an internet protocol address.

Claim 10. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the second device identification information includes at least MAC address information.

Claim 11. (Currently Amended) An information processing method for an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing

communication over a network, the method comprising:

holding corresponding information corresponding to first device identification information and second device identification information;

obtaining accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device;

comparing a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with the corresponding information held in said holding step, and determining whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed;

controlling issuance of a notification to notify an external apparatus ~~in accordance with~~ when said determining step determines that one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed ~~a result of the comparison in the comparing step~~ and not to notify the external apparatus when said determining step determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and

updating the corresponding information held in said holding step in accordance with an update notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information, from the external apparatus,

wherein the notification issued in said controlling step includes information

indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and

wherein said controlling step restricts issuing the accounting information obtained from the predetermined device in said obtaining step to the external apparatus if said determining ~~comparing~~ step determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained in said obtaining step to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated in said updating step.

Claim 12. (Canceled)

Claim 13. (Previously Presented) An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising receiving the corresponding information from the external apparatus through the communications line.

Claim 14. (Canceled)

Claim 15. (Previously Presented) An information processing method according to claim 11, further comprising

inputting an instruction for updating the first device identification information and/or the second device identification information via an input section, wherein the communication controlling step issues a notification for update, based on the update instruction

input in the inputting step, to the external apparatus.

Claims 16 - 18. (Canceled)

Claim 19. (Original) An information processing method according to claim 11, wherein the first device identification information is an internet protocol address.

Claim 20. (Original) An information processing method according to claim 19, wherein the second device identification information includes at least MAC address information.

Claim 21. (Currently Amended) A computer program stored, in executable form, in a computer-usable medium and comprising control logic for causing a computer to manage a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, the control logic comprising computer readable program code for:

holding corresponding information corresponding to first device identification information and second device identification information;

obtaining accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device;

comparing a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with the corresponding information held in said holding step, and determining whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information

is being managed;

controlling issuance of a notification to notify an external apparatus ~~in accordance with~~ when said determining step determines that one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed ~~a result of the comparison in said comparing step~~ and not to notify the external apparatus when said determining step determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and

updating the corresponding information held in said holding step in accordance with an update notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information, from the external apparatus,

wherein the notification issued in said controlling step includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and

wherein said controlling step restricts issuing the accounting information obtained from the predetermined device in said obtaining step to the external apparatus if said determination ~~comparing~~ step determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained in said obtaining step to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated in said updating step.

Claim 22. (Currently Amended) A recording medium that is readable by a computer storing a program that is executed by an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device capable of performing communication over a network, the program comprising code for:

holding corresponding information corresponding to first device identification information and second device identification information;

obtaining accounting information based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device;

comparing a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with the corresponding information held in said holding step, and determining whether or not at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed ;

controlling issuance of a notification to notify an external apparatus ~~in accordance with~~ when said determining step determines that one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed ~~a result of the comparison in said comparing step and not to notify the external apparatus when said determining step determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed~~, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and
updating the corresponding information held in said holding step in accordance

with an update notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information, from the external apparatus,

wherein the notification issued in said controlling step includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and

wherein said controlling step restricts issuing the accounting information obtained from the predetermined device in said obtaining step to the external apparatus if said determination ~~comparing~~ step determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and issues the accounting information obtained in said obtaining step to the external apparatus if the corresponding information is updated in said updating step.